

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-04

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-----077819 241804Z /44
O 241549Z JUN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 147378

PLEASE PASS US DEL INDIAN OCEAN WORKING GROUP

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: XO, PARM

SUBJECT: INDIAN OCEAN ARMS CONTROL

1. FOLLOWING IS AN EXCERPT FROM DEPARTMENT DAILY NEWS
BRIEFING OF 23 JUNE 1977:

Q. CAN YOU CLARIFY ON THE INDIAN OCEAN TALKS NOW GOING ON
IN MOSCOW? HAS THERE BEEN A CHANGE IN -- ALTERATION OF THE
SCOPE OF THE TALKS? INSTEAD OF DEMILITARIZATION, THEY'RE
NOW TALKING ABOUT ARMS LIMITATION.

A. WE BELIEVE FIRMLY THAT IT'S IN EVERYBODY'S INTEREST TO
AVOID ESCALATING A U.S.-SOVIET ARMS RACE IN THE INDIAN
OCEAN. THE TALKS THAT ARE UNDER WAY RIGHT NOW IN MOSCOW
CONSTITUTE THE INITIAL MEETING OF THE U.S.-SOVIET WORKING
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GROUP ON THE INDIAN OCEAN.

BASICALLY, WE SEE THE TALKS AS BEING PART OF A PROCESS
WHICH WOULD FIRST LEAD TO THE STABILIZATION OF U.S. AND
SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE THERE BUT, SECONDLY, THAT THIS
WOULD BE A CONTINUING PROCESS. WE ARE IN THAT PROCESS AND
ARE READY TO CONSIDER LATER ON REDUCTIONS IN THE PRESENT

LEVEL OF MILITARY PRESENCE.

Q. IN THAT CONTEXT, HODDING, IS DIEGO GARCIA, WHERE THE AMERICAN INSTALLATION IS SORT OF IN A BUILDING PROCESS -- IS THAT NEGOTIABLE UNDER POINT 1 OR POINT 2?

A. I THINK THAT THAT'S WHAT THE NEGOTIATORS ARE THERE IN MOSCOW FOR. I DON'T WANT TO GO INTO THE SPECIFICS OF HOW WE WOULD TRY TO GO TO EITHER THE FIRST GOAL OR THE SECOND GOAL.

I THINK I WOULD SIMPLY NOTE SOMETHING THAT JODY POWELL SAID YESTERDAY -- THAT THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID THAT IF WE CAN ARRIVE AT A SITUATION IN WHICH NEITHER OF US WERE INVOLVED THERE MILITARILY THAT THAT WOULD BE THE ULTIMATE GOAL.

Q. DO THE AUSTRALIANS AGREE WITH THAT GOAL?

A. I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ASK YOU TO ASK THE AUSTRALIANS.

Q. WE DID YESTERDAY. THEY WEREN'T CLEAR. CHRISTOPHER

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